

REMARKS

Claims 10-15 are presented for consideration, with Claims 10, 11 and 12 being independent.

Initially, Applicant notes with appreciation that Claims 10-15 are indicated as containing patentable subject matter and will be allowed if placed in independent form. In order to advance prosecution, Claims 10-12 have been amended and are now in independent form. In addition, Claim 1-9, 16 and 18 have been cancelled.

In the Office Action, Claims 1, 2, 9 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by prior art Figure 8. In addition, Claims 3-8 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over prior art Figure 8 in view of Shiono '433.

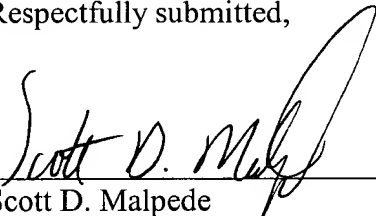
Without conceding the propriety of these rejections, Claims 1-9, 16 and 18 have been cancelled. Accordingly, these rejections are submitted to be moot and should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Appln. No.: 09/866,587

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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